

# Congress of the United States

## Washington, DC 20510

March 24, 2023

The Honorable Mike Simpson  
Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Simpson and Ranking Member Pingree:

As you draft the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee bill, we are writing today to request robust funding for two grants dedicated to remediating lead contamination in water – Lead Testing in School and Child Care Program Drinking Water and Reducing Lead in Drinking Water. These grant programs are crucial to supporting our nation’s schools and child care facilities in identifying and reducing lead contamination in their drinking water.

There is no safe level of lead exposure, which is particularly harmful to children. When a person swallows or breathes in lead particles, the body stores the toxin and it accumulates over time. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has made clear the disastrous health impacts of lead on children, which includes “damage to brain and nervous system, slowed growth and development, learning and behavior problems, and hearing and speech problems”.<sup>1</sup> The danger that lead poses is horrifically widespread, with one study finding that over 170 million people in the United States — over *half* of all Americans — were exposed to high-lead levels in early childhood.<sup>2</sup> This is a public health crisis and cannot be ignored.

While the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act appropriated \$15 billion dedicated to replace lead service lines around the country, this is merely a down payment on the levels of funding necessary to replace all lead service lines in the United States. Given the disastrous impacts of lead exposure on children especially, we must pay special attention to ensure that the drinking water in our schools is as clean as possible.

Therefore, we urge you to provide robust funding for the testing for and reduction of lead in school drinking water by funding two grants in line with the President’s Budget Request: **the Lead Testing in School and Child Care Program Drinking Water grant program at \$36.5 million, and the Reducing Lead in Drinking Water grant program at \$182 million.** The Lead Testing in School and Child Care Program Drinking Water program is a voluntary grant to assist local and tribal educational agencies and child care programs in testing for lead in drinking water at their facilities. The Reducing Lead in Drinking

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Environmental Health, “Prevent Children’s Exposure to Lead”. (27 October 2021). <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/leadpoisoning/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> McFarland, Hauer, and Reuben, “Half of US population exposed to adverse lead levels in early childhood”. (7 March 2022). <https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.2118631119>

Water program awards funding for the reduction of lead in drinking water in disadvantaged communities through drinking water infrastructure, treatment improvements, and facility remediation in schools and child care facilities in states and tribal communities.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you and your staff through the FY 2024 Appropriations process.

Sincerely,



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Sean Casten  
Member of Congress

*André Carson*

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André Carson  
Member of Congress



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Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



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Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress



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Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress



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Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



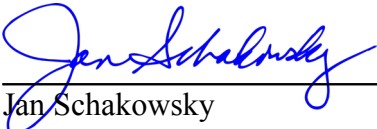
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Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



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Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



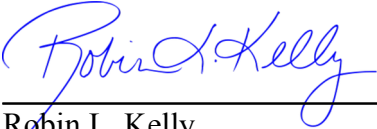
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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



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Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



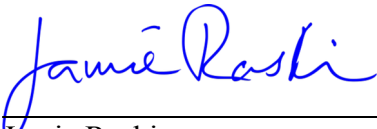
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Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



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David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



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Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



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Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress




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Abigail Davis Spanberger  
Member of Congress



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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress




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Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



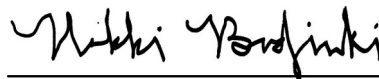
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Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



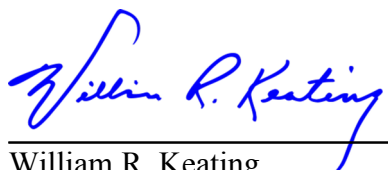
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Jim Tokuda  
Member of Congress



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Nikki Budzinski



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William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



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Diana DeGette  
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Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



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Danny K. Davis  
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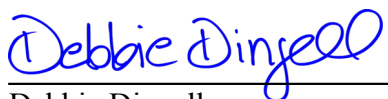
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Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



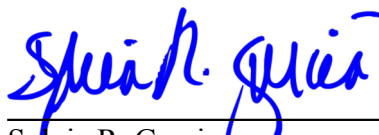
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Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



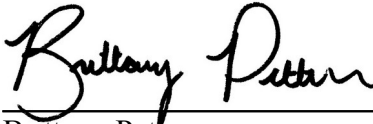
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Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



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Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



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Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress



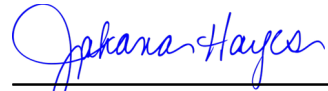
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Patrick K. Ryan  
Member of Congress



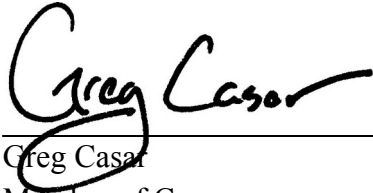
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Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
Member of Congress



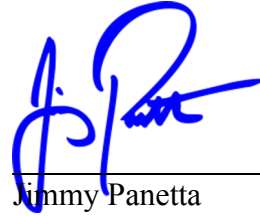
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Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



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Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



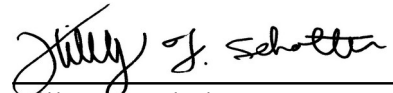
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Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



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Hillary J. Scholten  
Member of Congress



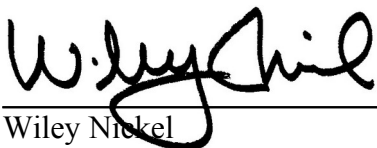
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Shri Thanedar  
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Wiley Nickel  
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Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
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Bradley Scott Schneider  
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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
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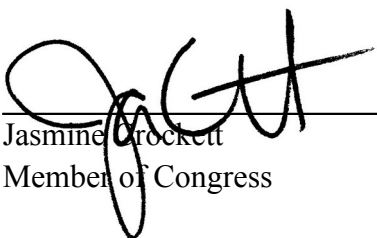
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.  
Member of Congress



Eric Sorensen  
Member of Congress



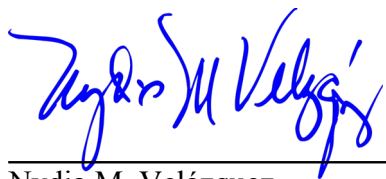
Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



David Scott  
Member of Congress



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Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



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Andy Kim  
Member of Congress



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Dwight Evans  
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Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress



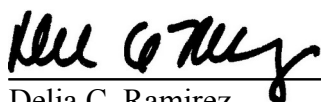
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Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



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Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



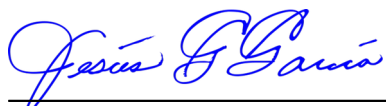
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Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



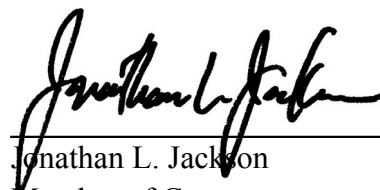
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Seth Magaziner  
Member of Congress



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Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



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Jonathan L. Jackson  
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